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RESEARCH COMMITTEE:
Wednesday 12th February 2020, HCA 023

PRESENT: Professor A. Nagar (in the Chair), Dr P. Bamber, Professor N. Donnelly, Dr G. Guthbertson, Professor D. Jeyaraj, Professor O. Khaiyat, Professor G. Mair, Professor K. Newport, Dr D. Reid.

By Invitation: Mr A. Bibby, Mr C. Cooper, Ms S. Murray

Secretariat: Mr Marc Jones

Apologies: Dr S. Harrop

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received the minutes of the meeting of Research Committee held on 30th October 2019 (RE 941), which were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

HIRA: The Chair confirmed that this would be dealt with later in the meeting.

LAESS Faculty Research Committee: Dr Cuthbertson informed members that the next meeting of LAESS Faculty Research Committee was scheduled for 25th March and that Mr Cooper has been invited to attend.

External Member for Research Ethics Sub-Committee: The Chair noted that he has yet to receive any nominations for this position and undertook to work with Mr Dykins on the matter.

Early Career Researcher Framework: Dr Cuthbertson confirmed that he has scheduled a meeting with Professor Newport to discuss this.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers: The Chair confirmed that this document had been circulated.

3. Preparations for REF2021

Members had received minutes of the REF Steering Group (REFSG) meeting on 20th November 2019 (RE 942) and 5th February 2020 (RE 943). Turning to the minutes of the 5th February 2020 meeting the Chair drew members' attention towards the table showing the results of the survey of submission intentions in Appendix 1. The Chair informed members that the University is intending to submit work by 87.57% of Category A eligible staff, as against a sector average of 74%. The Chair informed members that the focus of REF2021 activity now will be drafting and finalising impact case studies and statements for environment narratives.

Mr Cooper informed members that Environment workshop has been scheduled for 18th February, with Dr Ian Carter as the speaker. Dr Bamber suggested that external feedback on impact case studies would be helpful and the Chair confirmed that Dr Carter would be available to provide such feedback on Environment statements and that he is looking into Impact enhancement and feedback sessions as well.

The Chair informed members that UKRI has released the REF2021 online submission system, adding that work is underway on entering information. Prof Nagar informed that much of the Staff data has already been entered by him for which he created an automated data entry import process. The Chair informed members that unit co-ordinators now have access to the online system to start entering Output data. He also informed that a workshop in relation to this will be

CONFIRMED

scheduled. The Chair informed members that the internal deadline for Phase 1 data entry, refined documents, impact case studies and environment statements is **12 noon on Friday 1st May 2020**. The Chair added that the University's internal REF2021 submission-ready deadline is 30th September 2020, while UKRI's deadline is 12 noon on Friday 27th November 2020.

Dr Cuthbertson asked whether staff would be given 'right to reply' regarding the grades assigned to their outputs. The Chair responded that this process is clearly outlined in the University's REF Code of Practice (CoP) document and as per that process senior research active colleagues from within the University can be involved in an internal peer-review process where there are grey areas.

4. Reports from Research Centres – Annual Monitoring

The Chair had requested Centre directors to provide, along with their regular update reports, information relating to how their centre is contributing to the REF environment statements and impact case studies.

a. CCDS

Members had received an update from CCDS (RE 944). Members noted that CCDS activities have contributed significantly to the current draft of the education environment narrative. Members also noted that the 'Changing Social Attitudes to Disability' impact case study has received positive feedback from the external assessor, as have a large number of outputs aligned with the CCDS.

b. CEPA

Members had received an update from the Centre for Education and Policy Analysis (RE 945). Members noted that the Centre's forthcoming 'Digitisation and securitisation of upbringing: interdisciplinary perspectives' conference on 23-24 March has been developed in close collaboration with CEPA scholars from Early Childhood in order to contribute to one of the University's REF2021 Education impact narratives.

c. Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies

Members had received an update from the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Centre for War & Peace Studies (RE 946). Dr Cuthbertson drew members' attention to the Centre's 20 events so far this year with high profile speakers including the Colombian Ambassador to the UK and Ministerial Commissioner Dr Hajnalka Juhász and Péter Balla, Rector of the Károli Gáspár Reformed University in Budapest. In relation to budget, Dr Cuthbertson clarified that the centre receives funding from the School's budget.

d. Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity

Members had received an update from the Andrew F Walls Centre of the Study of African and Asian Christianity (RE 947). Professor Jeyaraj drew members' attention to the 5th Hope-Madras Christian College Seminar on "Christian Contributions to Education in India: Schools & Colleges" held at the Madras Christian College in Tambaram, Chennai, India on 20–21 January 2020.

e. SEARCH

Members had received an update from SEARCH (RE 948). Members noted the suspension of work in SEARCH following the reorganisation of the Faculty of LAESS. Professor Newport informed members that work is ongoing to define lines of demarcation between SEARCH and Everton in the Community. An internal funding call has also been issued as part of the Everton funding. Mr Cooper reminded members that the biannual review of Research Centres is due in 2021.

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5. Library Resources Update

a. Minutes of Library Steering Group

The Committee had received the minutes of the Library Steering Group for 22nd January 2020 (RE 949a).

b. Library Update

Members had received the Library Update (RE 949b). Re HIRA, Ms Murray informed members that following discussions with Professor Nagar and Mr Beecroft it was agreed to review the University structure on the Browse Divisions options on one of the forms in HIRA and make any changes necessary at the start of the next academic year. Ms Murray added that it was also agreed that 'Date' field for uploading Author's Manuscript would become a mandatory field to ensure that the Acceptance Date is recorded, which is an Open Access requirement for the REF. Ms Murray informed members that work is ongoing on the introduction of cover sheets and to review the use of email addresses on the Author Browse. Professor Khaiyat noted that some of the content on HIRA is inaccessible due to being locked. Ms Murray explained that such content is under embargo and is made accessible when the embargo period expires.

6. Research Funding

a. Quarterly reports on progress on research and grant income activity

Members had received the External Funding Bids update (RE 950). Mr Cooper noted a slight decline in the number and value of funding applications in the previous quarter, attributing this to colleagues' efforts being focused on the REF2021 submission.

b. University Research Funding

Members had received the Internal Research Funding update (RE 951). Mr Bibby informed members that the internal online research funding system (iREFund) is now in use. Mr Bibby informed members that to date 21% of the internal research budget has been allocated to 'approved awards'. Mr Bibby informed members that excluding CRT and Legacy transactions, a little over half (51%) of all allocations made to date are to support the presentation of papers at a conference. A further 9% are for conference attendance and 24% for publications. 72% of LAESS awards support conference presentations and attendance (57% & 15%) and 10% publications, while 47% of Sciences awards support conference presentations and 47% publications.

7. Research Degrees Sub Committee

Members had received minutes of the Research Degrees Sub Committee of 29th January 2020 (RE 952). The Chair drew members' attention to item 3 ('Update on PGR Regulations, Codes of Practice and Associated Procedures'), informing them that it has been agreed at Rectorate Team that **the maximum completion period for any research degree programme is the maximum duration as defined in the Code of Practice/Regulations plus one further academic year.** The Chair added that this new amendment will apply to all new starters from 2020 and will apply to Hope as well as our Partner HEIs; he also commented that he will be scheduling meetings with supervisory teams of students deemed to have exceeded the maximum duration for their research degree programme.

The Chair also drew members' attention to the decision to discontinue the TRE process, with the effect that for any new/current PGR student admitted/enrolled for MPhil route from this point onwards, if there is a clear potential for change of registration to PhD degree (based on the quality of the research work and evidence of quality of written chapters/publications) then an academic case will need to be made by the Supervisory team for consideration and approval by the PGR

CONFIRMED

Board/Chair of the PGR Board. This will help the PGR Board to be involved in decision making and avoid a situation where a decision of confirmation of TRE is made without the Board's approval.

Notification to the Senate: The Research Committee notifies Senate that: (1) the maximum completion period for any research degree programme is the maximum duration as defined in the Code of Practice/Regulations plus one further academic year; and (2) the TRE process for MPhil degrees has been removed and will be replaced with the PGR Board's adjudication.

8. Research Ethics Sub Committee

Members had received minutes from the Research Ethics Sub-Committee of 11th December 2019 (RE 953). Professor Jeyaraj informed members that the current online system for UG students to submit their applications for research ethics clearances and to obtain feedback from their supervisors works satisfactorily and that work is ongoing on a similar system for masters students as well as for PGR and Staff Research.

Professor Jeyaraj drew members' attention to the section of the minutes relating to text-based research, and the suggestion that researchers using only text-based research can apply for an ethical clearance for the text-based aspects of their subject area for a period of one to three years. The Chair asked Professor Jeyaraj to produce a paper on this matter for the next meeting.

The Chair informed members that the current six-times-per-year meeting schedule of Research Ethics Sub Committee is currently under review with a view to reducing the number of meetings perhaps to 3 meetings in an academic year.

9. Reports from Faculty Research Committees

a. Science

The Committee had received minutes from the meeting of the Faculty of Science Research Committee of 18th December 2019 (RE 954). Dr Reid informed members that a significant number of the faculty's PhD students, who were granted VC Scholarships, graduated in January 2019 and noted the importance of PhD students in the running of departments. The Chair replied that discussions are ongoing with regard to ways in which PhD student numbers might be maintained. The Chair also emphasised that Schools and Departments need to attract externally funded PGR students of high quality and not heavily rely on University scholarships.

b. Liberal Arts, Education and Social Sciences

The Committee had received minutes from the meeting of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities Research Committee of 6th November 2019 (RE 955). Dr Cuthbertson drew members' attention to the section relating to support of Early Career Researchers (p5).

10. **Monitoring Strategic Goals:** The Chair reminded members that the University's current Research & Scholarship Development Plan 2020 expires this year and informed them that work will soon begin on drafting the new plan.

ACTION LOG FOR NEXT RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Issue	Action	Responsibility	Progress
External member for Research Ethics Sub Committee	Professor Nagar to liaise with Mr Dykins re this.	Professor Nagar	
Clearance for text-based research	Professor Jeyaraj to produce report/proposal for next meeting.	Professor Jeyaraj	